News release

New weather awards

12 March 2003

A new standard recognising the work of weather forecasters and observers has been introduced in the Met Office. The introduction of a meteorological NVQ provides a nationally recognised standard by which Met Office staff can judge themselves, or be judged. Yesterday (March 11) the first successful candidates for the new NVQ qualification received their awards.

Over the last four years, working jointly with the private marine service Oceanroutes (UK) Ltd and the Royal Navy, the Met Office has set up a new NVQ qualification, sponsored by the Royal Meteorological Society. Following the NVQ launch in April 2001, the three working bodies set up as assessment centres. The Met Office gained accreditation as a centre in December 2001, Oceanroutes in May 2002 and the Royal Navy in January 2003.

The first seven successful Met Office candidates, three forecasters and four observers, have now gained their qualifications. The Met Office has another 11 forecasters and nine observers working towards the qualification - with seven others waiting to start.

Margaret Rudd, NVQ manager, said: 'We are very proud that trainers at the Met Office College in Torquay are now qualified to assess NVQs. As forecasters join the Office the NVQ will be seen as a vital part of their ongoing development, proving their competency within the workplace.'

Dai Naylor, a forecaster in Bracknell, said: 'This has taken a year to obtain and involved a lot of hard work, but after 24 years in the Met Office it is nice to have a nationally recognised certificate measuring my competency in my job.'

Ray Pearce, an observer at RAF Odiham, near Basingstoke, said: 'I feel a great sense of achievement. I am lucky to do a job which is also a hobby, I enjoy going to work and this now acknowledges that I am also good at what I do.'

Ray Taylor, an observer at Manchester airport, said: 'Since completing the NVQ I find that I have a heightened awareness of my job, what I am required to do, rules and regulations and how colleagues and customers are, or are not, affected by what I do.'

Notes:
NVQs are based on the assessment of competencies within the workplace. Although it is not an academic qualification the level 3 NVQ in observing is approximately equivalent to HNC level and the level 4 NVQ in forecasting equivalent to a degree.

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